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Thursday, 12 December 2002, 10.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Valdivieso	(Colombia)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	France	Mr. Duclos
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Gatilov
	Singapore	Mr. Yap
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Atieh
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2002/1314).

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02-73422 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2002/1314)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 37 of its provisional rules of procedure to His Excellency Mr. Mirko Šarović, Presiding Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Dragan Čović, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and His Excellency Mr. Dragan Mikerević, Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

Mr. Mirko Šarović, Presiding Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Dragan Čović, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Mr. Dragan Mikerević, Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, were escorted to their seats at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the Members of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to the Prime Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jacques Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chief of Mission.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Klein to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations. Members of the Council have before them document S/2002/1314, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH).

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear briefings by Mr. Jacques Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chief of Mission, His Excellency Mr. Mirko Šarović, Presiding Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, His Excellency Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and His Excellency Mr. Dragan Čović, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Kofi Annan, to whom I give the floor.

The Secretary-General: It is a great pleasure to be here at this Security Council meeting on the conclusion of the United Nations missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Prevlaka. Both these missions have successfully completed their mandates.

My report on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH) describes in detail what the mission has achieved and how it was done. It has completed successfully the most extensive police reform and restructuring project ever undertaken by the United Nations. In doing so, it broke new ground in the techniques of United Nations civilian-police operations. Bosnia and Herzegovina has now a police "fit for Europe"; this is the orientation of the country's leaders, and they will continue to pursue it. The presence of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina at today's session is a demonstration of their common determination to assume full responsibility for meeting the challenges ahead.

The United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP) had a more modest objective. By monitoring the demilitarization of the Prevlaka peninsula, it helped to shield this strategically important area from the fighting and tensions in the vicinity. In this way, it maintained a favourable situation for an eventual negotiated settlement. I am encouraged by the signing, on 10 December, of a protocol between Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on an interim agreement along their

southern border. While this protocol does not pre-judge the terms of the final settlement, it is a tangible expression of willingness, on both sides, to settle the dispute in a good-neighbourly manner.

Our mission continues in Kosovo. But with the end of these two missions — both, in their way, successors to the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) — an era of United Nations involvement in the former Yugoslavia comes to an end. This era has seen some of peacekeeping's bitterest moments, which have left a lasting impression on the Organization and on all of us who were personally involved.

I believe that, over time, we have drawn important conclusions about the nature, scope and role of United Nations peacekeeping and have made it a better instrument for the international community. UNMIBH and UNMOP have shown that, with the right mandate, the cooperation of the parties and the strong support of the Security Council and United Nations Member States in general, United Nations peacekeeping operations can make an important difference.

The United Nations will, of course, stay engaged in the Balkans. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo is carrying out a complex mandate, together with our partners: the European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

In doing so, it makes use of many of the lessons learned from Bosnia and Herzegovina. And in Bosnia and Herzegovina itself, the United Nations family will continue to support the Government and the people.

In conclusion, I want to thank Jacques Klein and Rodolfo Sergio Mujica for the leadership they have provided; the men and women of the two missions for their devoted service; the contributing Governments, for making their personnel available; the leaders of the host countries for their cooperation; and finally, this Council itself, for the steadfast support it has given.

Without all of you, the good work would not have been possible.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jacques Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chief of Mission.

Mr. Klein (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to be before the members of the Security Council once again to discuss, for the second time in six years, the successful completion of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. The conclusion of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), in 19 days' time, represents, in the annals of United Nations peacekeeping, the most important police-sector reform and restructuring programme that the United Nations has ever undertaken.

For myself and for the women and men who are part of UNMIBH, this moment fills us with pride that we have done our job well, but it also fills us with humility, because we are aware of our inability to prevent or to swiftly put an end to the conflict that took place 1 decade ago, whose consequences were tragic and devastating. Despite the difficult start of United Nations peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we conclude our Mission with our heads held high, convinced that the United Nations has helped the country to embark on the path of peace and stability. As was emphasized by the Secretary-General during his recent visit to Sarajevo, a historic chapter is drawing to an end. We close that chapter with dignity.

(*spoke in English*)

The role given to the United Nations under Annex 11 of the Dayton Peace Accords has been fulfilled. We leave behind a legacy of democratic law enforcement; police forces fit for Europe. A platform now exists on which the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with continued help from the international community, can build a society based on respect for the rule of law and functioning democratic institutions.

On 1 January 2003, the European Union Police Mission (EUPM) will begin to build on UNMIBH's achievements to ensure continued professional police performance. The Brahimi report called for greater cooperation between United Nations peace operations and regional organizations. This first operation under the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy is the practical embodiment of that recommendation.

Greater European involvement assures the common citizen that Bosnia and Herzegovina is an integral part of Europe — that it cannot be left to languish in a Balkan no-man's land, isolated from mainstream European political and economic development. The country must now move ahead with progressive reforms focusing on the rule of law, on economic development and on higher education standards. With vision and perseverance, Bosnia and Herzegovina's leader — who honour us today with their presence — can take the country to its rightful place in the European family of nations.

But serious systemic challenges remain. Politically, the fundamental bargain that institutionally and organically links citizens together in a single State without the need for external props has not yet been struck. Strengthening State-level institutions by giving them the necessary legislative, executive and financial authority is essential for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be able to function as a modern State in its European context. Economically, Bosnia and Herzegovina faces a critical challenge. With 64 per cent of the gross domestic product consumed by Government bureaucracy, priority issues such as educational reform, investment, job creation and the rule of law suffer. The leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina who are here today have in their hands the ability to reform the State apparatus in the interests of all of their citizens. I urge them to bring their bloated bureaucracies under greater fiscal discipline and to give Bosnia and Herzegovina, as a State, the revenue that it needs to survive and prosper.

As I have said before, justice and reconciliation will not take root until the country is rid of the malignant blight of war criminals. The continued freedom of Karadzic and Mladic, among others, keeps us all prisoners of the past and continues to demonstrate the international community's impotence in the face of evil. Bosnia and Herzegovina must fulfil its commitments to cooperate in full with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Additionally, building up domestic capacities to try ICTY-approved war crimes cases is an essential and necessary step, and current efforts in that direction deserve our collective support.

The new High Representative, Lord Ashdown, has at last set the right priorities. His motto, "First justice, then jobs, through reform", captures what the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina expect and what political authorities must deliver. Bosnia and Herzegovina has suffered too long from a political culture in which elections were no more than a census of ethnicity. Politicians should carefully read the results of the most recent elections: programmes count; politicians can lose office. Despite the clear progress that has been made, the assistance and the involvement of the international community continue to be essential. But new Governments need to act quickly and resolutely to ensure meaningful reform.

I now turn to the details of UNMIBH's completion of its core mandate. The Secretary-General's report (S/2002/1314) before the Council updates our activities since June 2002 and puts them in their historical context. As the Council is aware, the mandate implementation plan has been the conceptual guide of the Mission for the past two years. With the Council's endorsement, it has virtually served as our mandate. Based on established international standards of competence and integrity, our intensive reform and restructuring efforts have culminated in the certification of individual officers and the accreditation of police administrations. Local partnership and ownership have been the key to the implementation and the sustainability of our objectives.

Allow me to elaborate on our qualitative and quantitative achievements. UNMIBH created mechanisms to verify and certify that all current and future police personnel are qualified professionals able to serve the public with competence and integrity. To determine individual integrity, each police officer has been comprehensively vetted according to strict criteria: wartime activities, housing status, academic credentials, performance and adherence to human rights standards. Senior police personnel were subject to additional checks to ensure that managers were fit to manage. To establish individual competency, all serving police officers were intensively trained in basic standards of democratic policing through the two police academies that UNMIBH established. Training has now been fully handed over to local ownership. As a result, local police forces today comprise 15,786 certified law enforcement officers.

UNMIBH instituted structural reforms in law enforcement institutions, on the one hand to address organizational management and personnel policy deficiencies carried over from the war, and on the other to institutionalize the separation of politics from policing. To ensure organizational competence, through

our systems analysis project, we opened up budgets to external audits, instituted effective management and human resource systems, and ensured internal and external oversight mechanisms. The establishment of local change management teams, with UNMIBH's oversight, to implement our recommendations ensured that that project would reflect a change in the "corporate culture".

Three police administrations have thus far received UNMIBH accreditation as meeting the basic standards of democratic policing. With the support of the High Representative, the legislative framework is now in place to accredit the remaining administrations by the end of the mandate. To ensure organizational integrity, we established independent Police Commissioners and Directors of Police in 12 police administrations to insulate police work from unlawful political interference.

Police forces should reflect the community that they serve. Minority representation now averages 10 per cent in all police administrations. Recruited female officers currently make up an average of 3 per cent of the total personnel strength. That baseline will be advanced through institutionalizing recruitment and deployment mechanisms.

We have learned that the greatest threat to international stability comes from the institutional weaknesses of States themselves — from the inability of new democracies to control borders, to fight organized crime and to cooperate with neighbouring States. The multi-ethnic State Border Service is now fully deployed, a key UNMIBH achievement in enhancing Bosnia and Herzegovina's statehood and territorial integrity. With the establishment of the State Information and Protection Agency (SIPA), Interpol national coordination bureau and intra-State and regional cooperative mechanisms, the country now has an integrated law enforcement network to facilitate national, regional and international cooperation.

To combat the reprehensible trade of human trafficking, in July 2001 UNMIBH initiated the Special Trafficking Operations Programme (STOP), the largest and most extensive anti-trafficking programme in South-East Europe, comprised of local police monitored by International Police Task Force (IPTF) officers.

UNMIBH's institution-building efforts also encompassed assistance to help Bosnia and Herzegovina play an active role as a United Nations Member State. Civilian police and military observers are now participating in three United Nations peace operations, and troops are ready for deployment as part of a composite unit. Bosnia and Herzegovina is no longer only a beneficiary of, but also a net contributor to, peace operations.

When UNMIBH leaves, our success will be judged not only by what has been achieved but also by what we are leaving behind. The impact of police reform is measured by police performance and the level of public trust and confidence.

The sea change in police professionalism has created the essential security conditions for an unprecedented number of minority returns. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has registered more than 80,000 returns in the first nine months of this year — nearly the total year-end figure for 2001.

As a result of improved police planning and performance, public commemorations, re-inauguration of religious sites and large-scale inter-ethnic sporting and other events are, by and large, peaceful occurrences. The recent incident-free elections further attest to the high level of growing police professionalism.

With the establishment and deployment of the State Border Services (SBS), Bosnia and Herzegovina is no longer a springboard for illegal migrants into Europe. The dramatic reduction of illegal migration by more than 95 per cent over the last two years through the Sarajevo airport alone has benefited not only Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also the whole continent.

Intra-State and inter-State law enforcement cooperation is now routine,institutionalized at the ministerial level and operationalized through the Task Forces. The State of Bosnia and Herzegovina now has the functioning capacities and mechanisms to fight terrorism, organized crime and human trafficking both at home and in the region.

UNMIBH's Human Rights Office began coordinating joint IPTF and local police raids on establishments suspected of involvement in human trafficking in March 1999. Recognizing the magnitude of the problem, we established and monitored local

STOP teams in July 2001. Since then, over 830 raids have been conducted on 240 identified establishments. Of these, 152 have now been closed. Overall, several thousand women have been interviewed and more than 550 victims have been assisted with repatriation to their homelands. As a result of these operations, there are 52 ongoing prosecutions and 19 pending court cases, and 100 traffickers have been convicted.

In terms of police and public interface, we have witnessed a remarkable trend of growing public confidence and trust in the police. In sum, the transition of law enforcement agencies from tools of the State to professional servants of the public is firmly on track.

Complementing our core mandate, progress has been made and reinforced through two specialized United Nations Trust Funds. Through the United Nations Trust Fund for the Police Assistance Programme, $16.5 million has been provided for basic police equipment and facilities. Additionally, more than 540 quick-impact projects have been implemented from the United Nations Trust Fund for the Restoration of Essential Public Services, costing $25 million.

Finally, a few words on one of our greatest challenges — the legacy of Srebrenica. Our aims were not only to assist in healing the wounds of the survivors of the tragic massacre but also, in the scope of peace-building, to lay the foundations for recovery. We encouraged multi-ethnic representation in the police forces to build confidence for returnees, and as many as 3,500 Bosniacs have returned to the wider Srebrenica region so far. From the United Nations Trust Fund we disbursed over $1.6 million on infrastructure, including funding and construction of a model community police station. Additionally, in close cooperation with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), we initiated the Srebrenica Regional Recovery Programme. The Secretary-General's meeting, during his recent visit to Sarajevo, with representatives of one of the survivor groups, the Mothers of Srebrenica, served as another reminder that they are not forgotten.

Work has commenced on a project led by the Office of the High Representative to construct the Srebrenica-Potocari Memorial Cemetery. I take this opportunity to urge all Member States to lend their full support to fund-raising efforts to complete plans for the site and enable the burial of the victims to begin. At the very least, we owe the victims burials with dignity.

Today, UNMIBH has reached the point where we have confidence in passing the baton of police reform to a smaller successor mission. The seamless transition to the European Police Mission is well advanced. I welcome their agreement to give priority to the SBS, SIPA and the maintenance of effective counter-trafficking measures. I am also glad that the EUPM intends to continue a robust approach to organized crime. We are confident that under this framework our achievements will be sustained and UNMIBH's legacy preserved. The EUPM deserves the Council's full political support.

Even with such a solid baseline, challenges remain. Attention will be required to safeguard the integrity of police forces from political influence. For UNMIBH, this has been one of our overriding priorities. Unless efforts continue along these lines, sustainability of the achievements made so far in police reform and restructuring will be seriously undermined. Politics must be kept out from policing.

In the context of overall establishment of rule of law, there is a vast disparity between the levels of judicial reform and that of the police. UNMIBH's Criminal Justice Advisory Unit partially filled the void. However, definitive closure of this gap will depend on an accelerated pace of judicial reform. The fullest support is required for this already prioritized reform item for the sake of eliminating parasitic criminality and opening the doors to foreign investment.

Seven years of UNMIBH and a decade of United Nations peacekeeping in Bosnia and Herzegovina are about to end. Many lessons have been learned. I hope that one aspect of UNMIBH's legacy will be the application of the Mission's lessons to other peace operations. Two primary examples come to mind.

First, we have reached this closing phase only by knowing where we wanted to go. UNMIBH's mandate implementation plan encompassed our strategic and operational vision and our exit strategy. It helped to prioritize projects for international donor assistance and represented a process of local capacity-building for the eventual taking over of the tasks of police professionalization. I am heartened that this approach has found resonance for the work of the international community in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the

development of an Office of the High Representative mission implementation plan.

Second, a holistic approach to rule of law must happen early in a post-conflict situation and all the necessary tools put in one hand. Police reform and restructuring is only one aspect of the rule of law. Without complementarity and simultaneous reform of all areas, the rule of law will be a chain only as strong as its weakest link. A pillar construct must be in place to ensure the simultaneous professionalization of the full sector - police, judiciary and prison systems.

UNMIBH is a success. A mandate has been implemented, and there are visible signs that reforms are at work. The quality of the women and men of UNMIBH, representing 96 nations and 43 police-contributing States, and the support of the Council and of the Secretariat under the leadership of the Secretary-General have made this Mission our collective success.

You, the members of the Security Council, have provided the critical direction and means for UNMIBH to implement its core mandate. It has been an exemplary collaborative effort. Our colleagues in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations have been unwavering in their support and assistance, and their confidence in us has been an inspiration. To the Secretary-General, I would like to extend particular thanks and appreciation for his leadership not only in guiding the United Nations, but for his recent visit to Sarajevo to mark the end of an important chapter in United Nations peacekeeping in the Balkans. It also represented the realization of the Mission that he personally initiated in 1995.

(*spoke in French*)

We have witnessed in recent years the fulfilment of a partnership between the authorities and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations. Together we are closing this peacekeeping chapter. The United Nations system will, however, continue to work in other ways to help the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to build a better future. The path has been laid out: it leads towards a Europe-oriented future, on the basis of a spirit of reform and responsible leadership. I sincerely hope that the promise of a European future will enable the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to attain the goals to which they collectively aspire.

Before the work of UNMIBH is finalized, I would like to give the Council a small gift as an expression of our appreciation for its ongoing support and encouragement, which has helped us to complete our mandate and accomplish our mission successfully.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Klein, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chief of Mission, for his comprehensive briefing, which has supplemented his previous briefings. I would also like, on behalf of the members of the Council, to thank him for the gift that he has given us on this important and historic occasion.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mirko Šarović, Presiding Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Šarović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (*spoke in Serbian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for inviting me to participate in this important meeting. I believe that the final report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2002/1314) represents the end of one era and the beginning of another in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of previous decade, the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina was often under consideration in this Chamber. By adopting resolution 1031 (1995), which welcomed the Peace Agreement reached under United Nations auspices, the Council established the International Police Task Force, whose role was of great importance for the post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council thus provided for the implementation of the comprehensive Peace Agreement by defining the mandate of the United Nations peacekeeping mission.

The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina is about to complete its mandate. We are grateful to the United Nations and to all those who have supported the mission and sent troops to Bosnia and Herzegovina. We consider the withdrawal of the peacekeeping operation to be a sign of confidence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We believe that other international missions will gradually be withdrawn, so that the local infrastructure can take over their roles in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The role of the United Nations mission was of key importance in assisting the parties to ensure stability and establish the reform process, including the restructuring of the police force, with a view to creating a foundation for the rule of law. The United Nations mission helped to establish the State Border Service, which recently assumed the full control of the State border.

With the completion of the UNMIBH mandate, the European Union Police Mission will take over the process of institution-building in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Given Bosnia and Herzegovina's orientation towards integration into Europe, we fully support the transition from the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the European Union mission, as well as continued cooperation with its special agencies there.

With that transition, the United Nations mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina will have been successfully completed. I would like to express my gratitude to the United Nations, the Secretary-General and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Jacques Paul Klein, as well as to all other personnel of the mission. It was a very successful mission.

Given our efforts aimed at peace, both in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the institutions and bodies of the United Nations, I would like to remind the Council that we have submitted our candidacy for non-permanent membership of the Security Council for 2010-2012. We believe that we will be able to create an environment and build an infrastructure that transforms our shortcomings into advantages, as we will be able to use the experience gained during the foundation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the fight against crime and terrorism and thus contribute to the building of democracy in our country and in the world.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is playing an active role in the fight against terrorism. We are ready to support the United Nations in its war against terrorism, as well as the United Nations activities pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001).

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully committed to the implementation of United Nations resolutions. During Secretary-General Kofi Annan' visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina, the representatives and the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina confirmed their absolute commitment to reform and to the European and Euro-Atlantic integration processes. In this connection, following the October elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, our newly elected three-member Presidency, which represents our three constituent peoples and two entities, would like to emphasize its determination to continue the process of democratic transformation as we move towards sustainable peace and democracy.

We have a common responsibility and a common goal to ensure a brighter future for our children. I would like to note that, since the general election, we have been working to build a sustainable governmental infrastructure. The State and entity governments of Bosnia will have a new administration, and I am convinced that, working in partnership, we will continue to move towards reform and away from internal conflict. I believe that, in place of the bad news, we will increasingly be hearing good news from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Mr. Jacques Paul Klein for the work about which he spoke.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Mirko Šarović for his comprehensive briefing and for the kind words he addressed to me.

I give the floor to Mr. Dragan Cović, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Cović (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (*spoke in Croatian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to echo the gratitude expressed by Mr. Mirko Šarović for the invitation to participate in today's meeting and for the assistance that the Council has for years been extending to Bosnia and Herzegovina on its path towards peace and the building of a sustainable State.

In order to ensure a brighter future for Bosnia and Herzegovina, we are firmly committed to European integration and to the application of European standards at all stages of democracy-building, on the basis of internationally recognized norms, especially in the field of human rights.

The creation of a politically stable country that fully respects human rights must be based on equality for all peoples in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Bosnia and Herzegovina we all wish to see must ensure sovereignty and constitutionality for Serbs, Bosnians and Croats throughout its territory as well as ensure that their rights are protected. Only in this way can a multi-ethnic State become a community

of equal citizens working together to achieve common goals.

Full institutional legal protection for all ethnic groups is a requirement in order to ensure political freedom for each and every citizen.

Our economic and financial reforms will be achieved through the harmonization of tax rates and customs regulations. Other reforms will also be undertaken on our path towards European integration.

The creation of a unified economic space and the finalization of bilateral agreements on the promotion and protection of investments, the agreement on free trade, the reform of the financial sector and efforts to attract direct foreign investment are not merely election promises, but rather the strategy we are using to join the ranks of those countries that are not only economically sustainable but also able to attract investments.

The implementation of educational reform and the promotion of scientific, cultural and technical cooperation are preconditions for the creation of opportunities that will keep young people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and enable them to become active players in their own development and future. The achievement of peace, development and stability in this part of Europe is closely linked to the rebuilding and restoration of the infrastructure in this field.

The Presidency supports the strategy of "First justice, then jobs, through reform" set out by the High Representative. Bosnia and Herzegovina therefore remains fully committed to cooperation with the High Representative, primarily through dialogue. As the old proverb says, "Agreement builds a house".

Therefore, I would stress once again our readiness to reform the legal system, establish the rule of law, create economic sustainability and new jobs, promote the return of qualified young people from abroad, improve the educational system and promote scientific, educational and cultural cooperation with other countries in the region and in the world.

I would like to inform the Council that important progress has been made with respect to Bosnia and Herzegovina's accession to the Partnership for Peace and to NATO. We are also working actively to finalize the process of joining the World Trade Organization. We are currently working to fully and unconditionally fulfil our obligations under the road map, which will enable us to begin preparations for Bosnia and Herzegovina's admission to the European Union.

The existence of a large number of mine fields is a tremendous problem for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is working to implement and strengthen the Ottawa Convention on landmines.

We are also endeavouring further to reduce military expenses and to effect further reform in the armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially with respect to the establishment of civil control over the armed forces, which is a precondition for Bosnia's accession to Partnership for Peace and to NATO.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fully supports the universal implementation of the Programme of Action agreed upon at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Our relations with neighbouring countries are based on equality, full independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this regard, the goal of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina is to ensure that the ongoing process of the establishment of good-neighbourly relations with Croatia and Yugoslavia takes place on the basis of mutual trust and assistance. We support full and open cooperation, in particular on such important issues as the struggle against the traffic in human beings, organized crime and terrorism.

We in Bosnia and Herzegovina believe that regional cooperation is a key factor in the establishment of peace in the region and an indispensable element of our efforts towards European integration.

I should like to thank Mr. Klein and the Security Council for all of their efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Covic for his comprehensive briefing and for the kind words he addressed to the Security Council.

I give the floor to Mr. Sulejman Tihić, Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Tihić (Bosnia and Herzegovina) (*spoke in Bosnian; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to reiterate the gratitude expressed by my colleagues. The citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina will never forget the fact that 200 members of United

Nations forces lost their lives while carrying out a peace mission in our country.

I should like to stress that, although the mandate of the United Nations Mission will be completed on 31 December 2002, Bosnia and Herzegovina will need the help of the United Nations in future as well.

We need support with respect to the return of refugees, almost half of whom have not yet returned, or have not been allowed to return, to their prewar homes. This is true even today, seven years after the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. The return of refugees is a precondition for lasting stability in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Those who have returned have very hard lives, since they have no jobs and their property has been damaged or destroyed. We therefore consider the involvement of United Nations structures providing support for the return of refugees as being very important. The return of refugees means reversing ethnic cleansing. It also sends a clear message that anything created out of violence and crime will never be legitimized.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) will play a significant role in creating lasting peace, justice and confidence among ethnic groups. Unfortunately, the most notorious war criminals in Europe since the Second World War, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, are still at large. We therefore strongly support the work of the Tribunal. We request the Security Council to provide its full support to the Tribunal and to ensure that all parties involved provide their unreserved cooperation to the ICTY.

I must apologize, on this happy occasion, for having to mention Srebrenica. However, I believe it is my duty to do so — a duty I owe to both the victims and the truth, as well as to the cause of ensuring that the events at Srebrenica are never again repeated anywhere in the world.

On his recent visit to Sarajevo, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that the darkest chapter of the history of the United Nations was written at Srebrenica, which had been a United Nations safe haven. Srebrenica became the site of the worst war crime in Europe since the Second World War. The safe haven of Srebrenica was not protected and, as a consequence, an act of genocide took place that resulted in the murders of 7,000 to 10,000 people, mainly civilians. The responsibility of the United Nations in that tragedy is indisputable.

With regard to Srebrenica, I would also like to remind the Council that the families of the victims of Srebrenica have not yet returned to their homes. Neither have the victims received proper burial, as their remains are currently housed in morgues throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina. I appeal to the United Nations to help the survivors of Srebrenica to return to their homes and to assist them in burying the remains of the victims with honour. We are also working to build a memorial at Srebrenica.

I would like to join my colleagues in saying that we view positively the work of the United Nations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is thanks to United Nations Mission that Bosnia is now a stable country on the road to progress that is becoming a factor of stability in the entire region.

I would also like to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the understanding he showed the victims of Srebrenica and for his personal involvement. I believe he will continue to do whatever he can to help survivors return and ensure the proper burial of the victims, as well as to see to it that the criminals responsible are punished.

My particular gratitude goes out to Special Representative Jacques Paul Klein for his personal involvement in helping Bosnia and Herzegovina. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina will always remember him. During his mandate Bosnia was able to establish a single license plate, passport and customs and border controls.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council welcomes the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Coordinator of the United Nations Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina.
>
> "The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to support the implementation of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the annexes thereto, collectively the Peace Agreement (S/1995/999/annex), as well as the relevant decisions of the Peace Implementation Council.

"The Security Council takes this opportunity to express its deep appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative Mr. Jacques Paul Klein and the personnel of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), which includes the International Police Task Force, for the contributions to the implementation of the Peace Agreement. The Council highly appreciates the achievements of cooperative efforts in bringing about the successful conclusion of UNMIBH's mandate, which will expire on 31 December 2002, and expresses its thanks to all of the countries which took part in and contributed to the accomplishments of this Mission.

"The Security Council welcomes the decision of the European Union (EU) to send a Police Mission (EUPM) to Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1 January 2003, as part of a broader rule of law approach, as well as the close coordination between all those concerned to ensure a seamless transition of responsibilities from the IPTF to the EUPM, with the participation of the interested States which are not members of the EU.

"The Security Council reiterates that the primary responsibility for the further successful implementation of the Peace Agreement lies with the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina themselves and that the continued willingness of the international community and major donors to assume the political, military and economic burden of implementation and reconstruction efforts will be determined by the compliance and active participation by all the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina in implementing the Peace Agreement and all the reforms needed to rebuild a civil society.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Council encourages a continued commitment by Bosnia and Herzegovina to the promotion of peace and stability in the region, including through enhanced political and economic cooperation.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to keep the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina under review. The Council invites the EU to keep it regularly informed as appropriate on the activities of EUPM."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2002/33.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.